

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL: HIST 680: AN INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL HUMANITIES

This course is being proposed in conjunction with a new, online M.A. Certificate program in Digital Public Humanities that is being created by the Department of History and Art History in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution.

This course will be the required introductory course for all students in the certificate program. It will provide a theoretical and methodological introduction to the history and current practice of digital humanities; it will provide students with hands-on experience with the tools used in digital humanities; it will teach them how to create and manage their own scholarly identity online; and it will require them to create their own digital scholarship.

The course builds on the expertise of faculty in the Department of History and Art History in digital history and humanities. The department currently offers a range of classes covering digital history and public history from a number of different perspectives, ranging from introductory courses to advanced programming classes. This course draws on this base of knowledge and practice, but it differs in two important ways. Most importantly, it is the first to be developed to be delivered online, as part of a larger online certificate program. It is an important step in establishing the department's and the university's presence in online education, building on an area in which we are already internationally recognized as a leader and innovator. Second, it broadens the focus from specifically historical practice to the humanities more generally, putting its emphasis on concepts, tools, and approaches that can be applied to a variety of fields and contexts.

The course and the certificate program of which it is a part will draw on a national pool of interested students and professionals seeking expertise and credentials in this new and growing field. It will also be available to students currently in M.A. and Ph.D. programs throughout the university (especially in CHSS), as a way of enriching their studies in their own programs and providing a set of conceptual and practical skills in digital tools to complement their mastery traditional topics and methodologies.

The initial version of the course is being developed by Dr. Stephen Robertson, but numerous other faculty in the department could teach the class, including Dr. Sharon Leon, Dr. Lincoln Mullen, Dr. Sean Takats, and others. We anticipate offering the course annually.

This course was approved by the History Graduate Committee of the Department of History and Art History on 20 October 2014. It was voted on and approved by the full department on 24 October 2014.



Course Approval Form

For approval of new courses and deletions or modifications to an existing course.

registrar.gmu.edu/facultystaff/curriculum

Action Requested:

- ☒ Create new course ☐ Delete existing course
☐ Modify existing course (check all that apply)
☐ Title ☐ Credits ☐ Repeat Status ☐ Grade Type
☐ Prereq/coreq ☐ Schedule Type ☐ Restrictions
☐ Other: _____

Course Level:

- ☐ Undergraduate
☒ Graduate

College/School: CHSS Department: History and Art History
Submitted by: Jennifer Ritterhouse Ext: 3-1014 Email: jritterh@gmu.edu

Subject Code: HIST Number: 680 Effective Term: ☒ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer Year: 2015
(Do not list multiple codes or numbers. Each course proposal must have a separate form.)

Title: Current _____
Banner (30 characters max including spaces) Intro to Digital Humanities
New Introduction to Digital Humanities

Credits: ☒ Fixed 3 or ☐ Variable to
(check one) Repeat Status: ☒ Not Repeatable (NR) ☐ Repeatable within degree (RD) ☐ Repeatable within term (RT) Maximum credits allowed: _____
(check one)

Grade Mode: ☒ Regular (A, B, C, etc.) ☐ Satisfactory/No Credit ☐ Special (A, B, C, etc. +IP)
(check one) Schedule Type Code(s): ☐ Lecture (LEC) ☐ Lab (LAB) ☐ Recitation (RCT) ☐ Internship (INT)
(check all that apply) ☐ Independent Study (IND) ☒ Seminar (SEM) ☐ Studio (STU)

Prerequisite(s): _____ Corequisite(s): _____
Instructional Mode: ☐ 100% face-to-face ☐ Hybrid: ≤ 50% electronically delivered ☒ 100% electronically delivered


Special Instructions: (list restrictions for major, college, or degree; hard-coding; etc.) _____
Are there equivalent course(s)? ☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, please list _____

Catalog Copy for NEW Courses Only (Consult University Catalog for models)

Description (No more than 60 words, use verb phrases and present tense)	Notes (List additional information for the course)
Introduces students to key concepts, tools, and practices of digital humanities.	

Indicate number of contact hours: _____ Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3 Hours of Lab or Studio: _____
When Offered: (check all that apply) ☒ Fall ☐ Summer ☐ Spring

Approval Signatures

 11/25/2014
Department Approval Date College/School Approval Date

If this course includes subject matter currently dealt with by any other units, the originating department must circulate this proposal for review by those units and obtain the necessary signatures prior to submission. Failure to do so will delay action on this proposal.

Unit Name	Unit Approval Name	Unit Approver's Signature	Date

For Graduate Courses Only

Graduate Council Member _____ Provost Office _____ Graduate Council Approval Date _____

For Registrar Office's Use Only: Banner _____ Catalog _____

HIST 680: An Introduction to Digital Humanities

<http://rrchnm.org/robertson/hist696f14>

Prof. Stephen Robertson

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Office: Research Hall 483 | Office Hours by appointment

New technologies are transforming how humanities scholars do research, construct interpretations and communicate our ideas. This course provides an introduction to the field of digital humanities and to digital tools for text analysis – text mining, topic modeling – mapping and visualization, and online presentation. We will also explore new forms of academic writing, such as blogs and wikis, and the questions the digital humanities raises about the nature of scholarly arguments and the means by which humanities scholarship is distributed, evaluated, taught, and made accessible – or not.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

ASSESSMENTS

You will have an understanding of the development and nature of the field of digital humanities and its intersection with other fields

Reading Blog

You will have a working knowledge of the methods and basic tools used in digital humanities

Practicum Blog
Project

You will have established an online scholarly identity

Blogs

You will have an understanding of how new technologies are transforming humanities teaching, research, writing, and publishing

Reading Blog
Practicum Blog
Project

You will have created a piece of digital scholarship

Project

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- You are required to sign up for a domain hosting with Reclaim Hosting; the cost is \$25 for a year. There is no required textbook. All the readings are online.
- All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code: "not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, and/or lie in matters related to academic work." If you are uncertain what that policy covers, see the information provided by the [Office of Academic Integrity](#). All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.
- If you are copying and pasting text that someone else wrote, you might be plagiarizing. Pasted or manually retyped text is not plagiarized only when **all** of the following three conditions are true: 1) the pasted text is surrounded by quotation marks or set off as a block quote, and 2) the pasted text is attributed in your text to its author and its source (e.g., "As Jane Smith writes on her blog . . ."), and 3) the pasted text is cited in a footnote, endnote, and/or a bibliography (e.g., "Smith, Jane. Smith Stuff. Blog. Available <http://smithstuff.wordpress.com>. Accessed August 1, 2012.")
- Late work will not be accepted.
- No incompletes will be issued.
- Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me to make necessary accommodations (before February 1, please). Students should present appropriate verification from the [Office of Disability Services](#), (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 703-993-2474). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.
- If you are forced to miss either an examination or the due date for an assignment either as the result of an illness or a family emergency, fairness to all students in the class requires the proper documentation, without which your excuses will not be accepted

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation in Class Exercises and Exchanges [10%]

You will earn a good grade for this part of course by actively engaging with the various online formats for exchange and interaction that are built into the course and by making thoughtful contributions that reflect careful reading and consideration of the questions raised by what you have read.

Organizing Agenda for Discussion and Exchange [10%]

You will be responsible for organizing and managing the discussion for a week of the class (Depending on numbers, you may collaborate with another student on this assignment). Prepare a set of discussion questions. Your questions need to be open-ended, and to address topics and themes rather than individual readings. After the weekly class session, you will write a blog post reflecting on the discussion and exchange: how effective were your questions in engaging the class; what issues emerged in the discussion; did the discussion change your thinking on any topics?

- Discussion questions due by midnight on the Sunday before the class session opens for the week.
- Blog post reflecting on the discussion due by midnight on the Friday after the week's class session.
- No late work will be accepted.

Blog the Readings [20%]

Before each weekly class session, complete a blog post that reflects on that week's readings. Do not summarize the readings. Rather, your post should explore your reactions to the texts: what questions did they raise? What themes or issues emerged across the different readings? As the semester proceeds, you should also consider how the week's topic and readings relate to those from preceding weeks.

- The post is due by midnight on the Sunday before the weekly class session opens.
- No late work will be accepted.

Blog the Practicums [20%]

After each of the first 9 class sessions, complete a blog post discussing your work on the practicum for that session. Describe what you found, and, when you used a digital tool, your process (was the documentation clear? did you have any problems in using the tool?)

- The post is due by midnight on the Friday after the class session.
- No late work will be accepted.

Project [40%]

Complete an analysis using digital methods. You should work on a topic and sources related to your research interests. You can use any of methods we cover in the course. Writing an essay and putting it online in WordPress is *not* using a digital method. You could build an online exhibit in Omeka or Scalar, or use mapping, text mining, topic modeling or network analysis. The entry-level tools that we are examining in this course lend themselves to discovery rather than investigation; hence, your project will be testing whether a digital method offers a new perspective rather than offering an explanation or argument.

In addition to the project, you are required to complete a blog post reflecting on the process of completing the assignment: what problems, if any, did you have in applying your chosen method and using digital tools?

- The project and blog post are due by midnight on Friday, December 12
- No late work will be accepted

SCHEDULE & READINGS

Subject to change – check the website

1. WEEK ONE: **Getting Started:**

a. Internet Basics

- i. Dan Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Getting Started: The Basic Technologies Behind the Web," in *Digital History* (2006)
- ii. 40 Maps that explain the internet, Vox (2014)
- iii. WWW Timeline (Pew Research Internet Project, 2014)
- iv. "How the internet has woven itself into American life," Pew Research (2014)

b. Your Web Presence

- i. Miriam Posner, Stewart Varner & Brian Coxall, "Creating Your Web Presence," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2/14/11)
- ii. Jim Groom, "How the Web was Ghettoized for Teaching and Learning in Higher Ed" (2014)
- iii. Seth Zweifler, "For Professors, Online Presence Brings Promise (and Peril)," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (4/21/2014)
- iv. Heather Cox Richardson, "Should Historians Use Twitter, PT 1 & 2" (2013)
- v. Ryan Cordell, "How to Start Tweeting (and Why You Might Want To)," *ProfHacker* (August 11, 2010)

PRACTICUM: Set up Reclaim Hosting; Install WordPress

- Assess your online presence & outline what presence you think you need

2. WEEK TWO: **The field of Digital Humanities**

- a. Dan Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Introduction: Promises and Perils of Digital History," *Digital History* (2006)
- b. Kathleen Fitzpatrick, "The Humanities, Done Digitally," *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed Matthew Gold (2012)
- c. Peter Lunenfeld, Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, Todd Presner and Jeffrey Schnapp, *Digital Humanities* (MIT Press, 2012) *The link downloads the open access edition of the book -- begin with "A Short Guide to Digital Humanities," pp. 122-127, then "Emerging Methods & Genres," pages 29-60*
- d. Lisa Rhody, "Working the Digital Humanities: Uncovering the Shadows between the Dark and the Light" (2014)

PRACTICUM: Assess the digital history of your research field/topic

3. WEEK THREE: **Digitization**

a. Digitization

- i. Dan Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Chapter 3: Becoming Digital," *Digital History* (2006)

- ii. Simon Tanner, "Deciding whether Optical Character Recognition is feasible" (2004)
- iii. Ian Milligan, "Illusionary Order: Online Databases, Optical Character Recognition, and Canadian History, 1997–2010," *Canadian Historical Review* 94, 4, December 2013, pp. 540-569 (focus on 558-569)
- iv. Paul Conway, "Building Meaning in Digitized Photographs." *Journal of the Chicago Colloquium on Digital Humanities and Computer Science* 1, 1 (2009)
- b. Digital and Material
 - i. Marlene Manoff, "The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives," *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 6, 3 (2006): 311-325
 - ii. Sarah Werner, "When Material Book Culture Meets Digital Humanities," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, 3 (2012)
 - iii. Bob Nicholson, "The Digital Turn," *Media History* 19, 1 (2013): 59-73

PRACTICUM: Google Drive OCR; Chronicling America

- Assess the OCR of a digital resource in your research field

4. WEEK FOUR: **Databases & Search**

- a. Lev Manovich, "Database as a Genre of New Media," *AI & Society* 14 (2000)
- b. Tim Hitchcock, "Digital Searching and the Re-formulation of Historical Knowledge," *The Virtual Representation of the Past*, eds Mark Greenglass and Lorna Hughes (2008)
- c. Patrick Spedding, "The New Machine": Discovering the Limits of ECCO," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, 4 (Summer 2011): 437-453
- d. Caleb McDaniel, "The Digital Early Republic," (2011)
- e. James Mussell, 'Doing and Making: History as Digital Practice', *History in the Digital Age*, edited by Toni Weller (London: Routledge, 2013), 79-94
- f. Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," (preprint, 2014)

PRACTICUM: Examine the use of databases of digital sources in articles in the last three years of issues from a journal in your field: how does that usage relate to the arguments made in this week's readings?

5. WEEK FIVE: **Text mining & Topic Modeling**

- a. Ted Underwood, "Theorizing Research Practices We Forgot to Theorize Twenty Years Ago," (*Representations*, forthcoming 2014)
- b. Ted Underwood, "Where to start with text mining" (2012)
- c. Frederick Gibbs and Daniel Cohen, "A Conversation with Data: Prospecting Victorian Words and Ideas," *Victorian Studies* 54, 1 (Autumn 2011): 69-77
- d. Cameron Blevins, "Space, Nation, and the Triumph of Region: A View of the World from Houston," *Journal of American History* (2014) 101 (1): 122-147
 - i. Cameron Blevins, "Mining and Mapping the Production of Space" (2014)
- e. Robert Nelson, "Mining the Dispatch"

- f. Miki Kaufman, "Everything on Paper Will Be Used Against Me": Quantifying Kissinger" (2014)

PRACTICUM: Compare results from the four ngram viewers below — and then compare those results with what does Voyant tells you about a text

- Google Ngram Viewer
- Bookworm + Bookworm: Vogue
- NYT Chronicle
- Voyant Tools

6. WEEK SIX: Visualization & Networks

- a. John Theibault, "Visualizations and Historical Arguments," *Writing History in the Digital Age* (2012), eds Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki
- b. Johanna Drucker, "Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display," *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly* 5, 1 (2011)
- c. Lauren F Klein, "The Image of Absence: Archival Silence, Data Visualization, and James Hemings," *American Literature* 85, no. 4 (2013): 661-688
- d. Mapping the Republic of Letters: Case Studies
- e. Elena Friot, Go Go Gadget, Gephi! The (Mis)Adventures of a Newbie DHer (2013)
- f. Scott Weingart, When Networks are Inappropriate (2013)

PRACTICUM: Palladio; Gephi

7. WEEK SEVEN: Mapping

- a. Tim Hitchcock, "Place and the Politics of the Past" (2012)
- b. Trevor Harris, John Corrigan and David Bodenhamer, "Challenges for the Spatial Humanities: Toward a Research Agenda," *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (2010), 167-176
- c. Edward L. Ayers & Scott Nesbit, "Seeing Emancipation: Scale and Freedom in the American South," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 1, 1 (March 2011): 3-24
 - i. Visualizing Emancipation
- d. Elijah Meeks and Karl Grossner, "Modeling Networks and Scholarship with ORBIS," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, 3 (2012)
 - i. Stuart Dunn, "Review of ORBIS," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, 3 (2012)
 - ii. Elijah Meeks, "Why Update ORBIS?" (2014)
 - iii. ORBIS
- e. Stephen Roberson, "Putting Harlem on the Map," in *Writing History for the Digital Age* (2012), eds Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki
 - Nicholas Grant, "Digital Harlem," *Reviews in History* (July 2013)
 - Digital Harlem

PRACTICUM: Google Map Engine; Google Earth; StoryMap

8. WEEK EIGHT: Public Humanities

- a. Carl Smith, "Can You Do Serious History on the Web?" *Perspectives* (February 1998)
 - i. The Great Chicago Fire (1996)
 - ii. The Great Chicago Fire (2011)
- b. Mark Tebeau, "Listening to the City: Oral History and Place in the Digital Era," *The Oral History Review* 40, 1 (2013): 25-35
- c. Bruce Wyman et al, "Digital Storytelling in Museums: Observations and Best Practices," *Curator* 54, 4 (2011): 461-468
- d. Anne Lindsay, "#VirtualTourist: Embracing Our Audience through Public History Web Experience," *The Public Historian* 35, 1 (2013): 67-86
- e. Melissa Terras, "Digitisation's Most Wanted" (5/15/2014)

PRACTICUM: Omeka

9. WEEK NINE: Crowdsourced Humanities

- a. Wikipedia
 - i. Roy Rosenzweig, "Can History be Open Source? Wikipedia and the Future of the Past," *The Journal of American History* 93, 1 (June, 2006): 117-46
 - ii. Leslie Madsen-Brooks, "Engendering Online History: Wikipedia vs Ancestry.com," *The Blue Review* (2013)
- b. Crowdsourcing
 - i. Trevor Owens: "The Crowd and the Library"; "The Key Questions of Cultural Heritage Crowdsourcing Projects" (2012)
 - ii. Tim Causer, Justin Tonra and Valerie Wallace, "Transcription Maximized; expense minimized? Crowdsourcing and editing *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*," *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 27, 2 (2012): 119-137
- c. Collecting
 - i. Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Chapter 6: Collecting History Online," *Digital History* (2006)
 - ii. Sheila A. Brennan and T. Mills Kelly, "Why Collecting History Online is Web 1.5," Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media (2009)
- d. Social media
 - i. Rebecca Onion, "Snapshots of History," *Slate* (Feb 5 2014)

PRACTICUM: Edit a Wikipedia entry related to digital history

10. WEEK TEN: Games

- a. Joshua Brown, "From the Illustrated Newspaper to Cyberspace: Visual Technologies and Interaction in the Nineteenth and Twenty-first Centuries," *Rethinking History* 8, 2 (2010): 253-75
 - i. The Lost Museum
- b. Laura Zucconi, Ethan Watrall, Hannah Ueno, and Lisa Rosner, "Pox and the City: Challenges in Writing a Digital History Game," *Writing History in the Digital Age* (2012), eds Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki
 - i. Elizabeth Goins, "Pox and the City: Designing a Social history Game," *Gamasutra* (2014)
- c. Adam Chapman, "Privileging Form Over Content: Analysing Historical Videogames," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, 2 (2012)
- d. Adam Chapman, "Is Sid Meier's Civilization history?" *Rethinking History* 17, 3 (2013): 312-332
- e. Trevor Owens, "Games as Historical Scholarship," *playthepast* (1/29/2014)

11. WEEK ELEVEN: Digital Scholarship

- a. Tim Hitchcock, "Academic Writing and Its Discontents," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, 1 (Winter 2011)
- b. Blogging
 - i. Alex Sayf Cummings and Jonathan Jarrett, "Only Typing? Informal Writing, Blogging and the Academy," *Writing History in the Digital Age* (2012), ed Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki
 - ii. Joan Fragaszy Troyano, "Two Years of the Journal of Digital Humanities," *PressForward* (2014)
 - iii. Melissa Terras, "The Impact of Social Media on the Dissemination of Research: Results of an Experiment," *Journal of Digital Humanities*, 1, 3 (2012)
- c. Digital articles
 - i. William Thomas, "Writing A Digital History Journal Article from Scratch: An Account" (2007)
 - ii. Edward Ayers, "Does Digital Scholarship Have a Future?" *Educase Review* (August 5, 2013)
 - iii. American Historical Review Prize for the Best Digital Article (2012)
- d. Jack Dougherty, Kristen Nawrotzki, Charlotte Rochez, and Timothy Burke, "Conclusions: What We Learned from Writing History in the Digital Age," *Writing History in the Digital Age* (2012), ed Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki (Paragraphs 1-14 only)
- e. Alex Galarza, Jason Heppler and Douglas Seefeldt, "A Call to Redefine Historical Scholarship in the Digital Turn," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, 4 (2012)

12. WEEK TWELVE: Open Access, Open Source, Copyright

- a. Dan Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Chapter 7: Owning the Past?" *Digital History* (2006)
- b. Peter Suber, "Open Access Overview"

- c. Dan Cohen, "[Treading Water on Open Access](#)" (September 25, 2012)
- d. Debating Dissertation Embargos (read the comments on the blog posts)
 - i. [American Historical Association Statement on Policies Regarding the Embargoing of Completed History PhD Dissertations](#) (July 2013)
 - ii. [Q&A on the AHA's Statement on Embargoing of History Dissertations](#) (July 24, 2013)
 - iii. William Cronon, "[Why Put at Risk the Publishing Options of Our Most Vulnerable Colleagues?](#)" (July 26, 2013)
 - iv. Trevor Owens, "[Notes toward a Bizarro World AHA Dissertation Open Access Statement](#)" (July 22, 2013)
 - v. Adam Crymble, "[Students should be empowered, not bullied into open access](#)" (July 23, 2013)
 - vi. Rebecca Anne Goetz, "[Do not fear open access. Embrace It](#)" (August 22, 2013)
- e. [Judge Chin's Ruling on Google Books Fair Use](#) (New York Times)
- f. Patricia Aufderheide, Peter Jaszi, Bryan Bello and Tijana Milosevic, [Copyright, Permissions and Fair Use among Visual Artists and the Academic and Museum Visual Arts Communities](#) (2014), 5-11, 49-59
- g. [Creative Commons Licenses](#)

13. WEEK THIRTEEN: Teaching in the Digital Age

- a. Danah Boyd, "Chapter 7: literacy: Are today's youth digital natives?" *It's Complicated: The social lives of networked teens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 176-198
- b. Dan Cohen, "[Pragmatic as Well as Prescient: Digital History Education at George Mason University](#)," *Perspectives* (May 2009)
- c. Mills Kelly, "[Chapter 5: Making: DIY History?](#)" *Teaching History in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013)
- d. Adam Rabinowitz, "[Reading Herodotus spatially in the undergraduate classroom, Part III](#)," *Hestia* (July 22, 2014)
- e. Allison Marsh, "[Omeka in the Classroom](#)," *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 28, 2 (2013): 279-282
- f. Nicholas Trepanier, "[The Assassin's Perspective: Teaching History with Video Games](#)," *Perspectives* (May 2014)

14. WEEK FOURTEEN: Project Blogs/Wrap up
